

## Message

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**To:** AO OPA Individual News Clips [AO\_OPA\_Ind\_News\_Clips@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Washington Examiner: While media fixate on Scott Pruitt's living arrangements, his EPA reforms are praiseworthy (\*Op-Ed), 4/3/18

**Washington Examiner**

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/while-media-fixate-on-scott-pruitts-living-arrangements-his-epa-reforms-are-praiseworthy>

**While media fixate on Scott Pruitt's living arrangements, his EPA reforms are praiseworthy (\*Op-Ed)**

By Kevin Mooney, 4/3/18, 1:09 PM

President Trump's EPA appears poised to liberate American consumers from Obama-era vehicle regulations rooted in misguided climate change policies.

On Monday, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a press release that the greenhouse gas emissions standards for cars and light trucks for the model years 2022-2025 should be revised based on updated data. Pruitt also announced the beginning of a "joint process" with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that will result in "more appropriate" standards for greenhouse gas emissions and Corporate Average Fuel Economy regulations, widely known as CAFE standards, that impose restrictions on the size of vehicles.

Pruitt announced his agency's regulatory reforms upon completion of the Midterm Evaluation process for the greenhouse gas emissions standards for cars and light trucks, a process which the Obama administration "short-circuited" just days before leaving office, according to the release.

"The Obama Administration's determination was wrong," Pruitt said in the release. "Obama's EPA cut the Midterm Evaluation process short with politically charged expediency, made assumptions about the standards that didn't comport with reality, and set the standards too high."

He added:

Cooperative federalism doesn't mean that one state can dictate standards for the rest of the country. EPA will set a national standard for greenhouse gas emissions that allows auto manufacturers to make cars that people both want and can afford — while still expanding environmental and safety benefits of newer cars. It is in America's best interest to have a national standard, and we look forward to partnering with all states, including California, as we work to finalize that standard.

Pruitt's actions have earned him praise from the Competitive Enterprise Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank devoted to free enterprise and individual liberty.

"CAFE's lethal effects on vehicle crashworthiness were documented by analysts and a federal appeals court years ago," Sam Kazman, CEI's general counsel said in a news release. "Despite this, CAFE has remained in force, getting even more stringent and more deadly over the years. We hope that the Trump Administration will finally take account of those effects and start to liberalize this program."

Myron Ebell, who is the director of CEI's Center for Energy and Environment, said American consumers stand to benefit from the announced reforms in terms of vehicular safety, performance, size and fuel economy.

"This is the first step in many years toward reducing government control over what kinds of cars people can choose to buy," he said.

The restrictions that were previously imposed under the guise of fuel efficiency rest on a faulty premise, Marlo Lewis, a senior fellow with CEI explained in the press release.

"Fuel economy mandates restrict consumer choice, add thousands of dollars to the cost of new vehicles, and limit vehicle safety," he said. "Contrary to the program's original rationale, the world is not running out of oil. And even if you worry about global warming, fuel efficiency standards are a stupendously inefficient climate change mitigation strategy. Congress should end the reign of bureaucrats and put consumers back in charge of telling automakers what kinds of cars and trucks to produce."

Pruitt has come under fire recently for his living arrangements in Washington, D.C. ABC News has reported that Pruitt spent his first several months in Washington living in a condo partially owned by the wife of an energy firm lobbyist and reportedly only paid \$50 a night for the condo, which is located in close proximity to Capitol Hill. Former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has suggested that Pruitt may not keep his position as a result of the revelations.

But, at the same time, Pruitt's efforts to alleviate the regulatory burden on average Americans while working to restore sound scientific practices within the EPA arguably rank among the Trump administration's most significant policy achievements.

EPA officials quoted in the press have said Pruitt's living arrangements did not violate ethics rules. Even if there is no technical violation, appearances matter in Washington. That's especially true for someone who has been remarkably effective up until now in advancing the Trump administration's efforts to free the economy from centralized planning in Washington.